AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A cyanine compound represented by general
 formula (I):

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
R1 & R2 & R4 & R3 \\
\hline
A & & & & & \\
N+ & & & & & \\
Y1 & & & & & \\
Y1 & & & & & & \\
\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
R1 & R2 & R4 & R3 \\
\hline
R3 & & & & \\
R4 & & & & \\
R3 & & & & \\
R4 & & & & \\
R3 & & & & \\
R4 & & & & \\
R3 & & & & \\
R4 & & & \\
R4 & & & \\
R4 & &$$

wherein ring A and ring B each represent a benzene or naphthalene ring that may be substituted; at least one of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups, and the other paired groups each represent an alkyl group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to each other to form a 3- to 6-membered ring; Y1 and Y2 each represent an organic group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms; An^{m-} represents an m-valent anion; m represents an integer 1 or 2; and p represents a coefficient for maintaining the charge neutrality.

- 2. (original) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein each of R1, R2, R3, and R4 is a benzyl group.
- 3. (original) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein ring A and/or ring B constituting the heterocyclic ring with the adjacent two benzyl groups is a naphthalene ring.
 - 4. (original) An optical recording material containing the

cyanine compound of claim 1, the optical recording material being adapted to be used in an optical recording layer formed on a substrate to make an optical recording medium.

5. (currently amended) An optical recording medium comprising a substrate and a thin film of the optical recording material of claim \pm 4 on the substrate.